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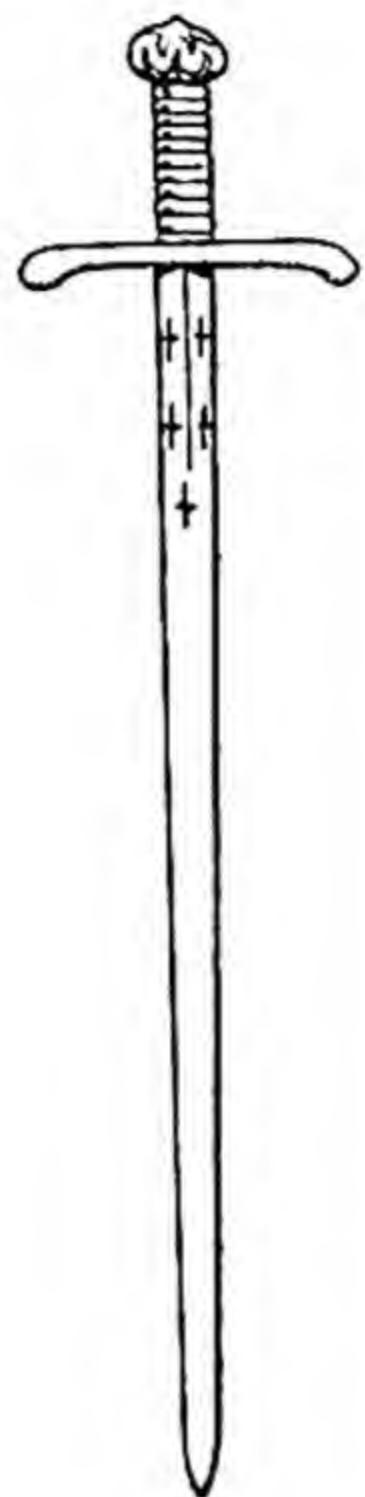
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BEFORE THE ALTAR



THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

178'

BY
F. H. LEE

ILLUSTRATED BY
HONOR C. APPLETON



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THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

CHAPTER I

THE PEASANT MAID OF DOMRÉMY

THERE was great gladness in the lovely little French village of Domrémy on January the sixth, 1412. Every one was making merry, for it was Twelfth Night, or the Feast of Gifts.

And on this very night in the cottage by the church there was born a baby girl. Her



A BABY GIRL

father and mother did not dream that their little maid, Jeanne, would one day lead armies to battle; yet such was really to happen.

Her father was not poor, but he had to work hard with his sheep and cattle and in the fields. As Jeanne grew up she, too, with her three brothers and sister, helped to plough the land, and watch the cattle, and work in the house.

She never learned to read or write, but her

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

mother taught her to spin and sew as well as any lady in the land.

Jeanne spent many happy days playing with her friends in the beautiful meadows round the village. She loved also to go away to the woods and be alone, or she would often steal away to church to pray, while the others went to dance.

She would nurse sick people, and many times she let poor travellers sleep in her bed while she lay by the hearth all night. All the people of Domrémy loved her for her goodness and her simple homely ways.

Quite near her home was a thick oak and beech wood, to which Jeanne and her friends often drove the pigs, to feed on the acorns and beech nuts. But the children must always be careful there, for wolves roamed among the trees, and the wood was said to be haunted by evil fairies too.

On May days Jeanne used to dance with her friends round one of the giant forest-oaks called 'The Fairy Tree'; and they gathered wild flowers and wove them into garlands to hang upon the boughs. Then they drank of the fountain near by, and ate the little cakes they had brought for their picnic.

Yet while still a child Jeanne began to understand that her land of France was in a very sad state. The King, Charles VI, was very weak in mind and not fit to govern the country, while the Queen Isabella was utterly selfish and cared little for good laws.

She made the poor peasants pay such huge

THE PEASANT MAID OF DOMRÉMY

sums of money that they had scarcely enough food to keep themselves alive. This money she spent extravagantly on herself and her Court. She even proved false to her own husband, Charles VI.

Some of the French people, the Orleanists, were true to the King, while others, the Burgundians, would not own him. So there was a bitter war between the two parties. The Queen joined the Burgundians, who were also helped by King Henry V of England.

A great battle was fought, and then in 1420 a treaty, called the Treaty of Troyes, was signed between the French and the English. This said that the English King should marry the French princess, Catherine, and be King of France when the poor mad King Charles VI died.

Thus by this treaty the Dauphin, the son of the French King, was set on one side by the Burgundians; and some even said that he was not the true heir to the throne.

The Orleanists, however, still remained faithful to him, and so the bitter struggle went on.

To the quiet village of Domrémy stories of the wars were brought by travellers and merchants and pedlars. In this way Jeanne heard what was going on, and of the sad state of France.

Just near Domrémy was a strong but deserted castle, round which was a splendid garden and a deep moat. Jeanne's father, Jacques d'Arc, and six other villagers rented

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

this castle as a fortress where they could seek protection for themselves and their cattle if the Burgundians attacked Domrémy.

The children of Domrémy often played at



STORIES OF THE WARS WERE BROUGHT BY TRAVELLERS

sieges in this castle. Many times, too, Jeanne would wander alone through the garden, dreaming and wondering if her land would ever be at peace.

Now the Dauphin was not strong enough to be a good ruler. He was a handsome prince, full of pity for the poor, but too weak to rouse himself to fight for the cause of his country, being ready rather to hide from his people in castles than attack the enemy.

He dared not go to Rheims where all French kings should be crowned, for Rheims was in the hands of the English. Neither was there

JEANNE'S VOICES

any great general or leader to help him in his wars, and it seemed that all must soon fall into the hands of the English and the Burgundians.

CHAPTER II JEANNE'S VOICES

UNTIL Jeanne was thirteen years old she led the ordinary life of a peasant girl. She was good and kind, everybody loved her, and though she liked to pray rather more than the others, yet she joined them in their games and work.

When she went to the Church of St Rémy, close to her cottage-home, she saw images of many saints, and sometimes offered to them garlands of wild flowers which she had gathered. Her favourite saints were St Catherine and St Margaret.

St Catherine was the guardian saint of soldiers and wore two crowns—the crown of suffering and the crown of purity. She was martyred in Egypt, and it is said that angels carried her body to Mount Sinai. From there a French soldier had brought back relics of the saint to the village of Fierbois, near Chinon, and at her shrine many people were healed and other miracles were said to happen.

It is no wonder then that Jeanne loved these two saints, for St Margaret had been compelled to flee from her home because she was a Christian, and she, too, was martyred when only eighteen years old.

In the church also was kept a very precious

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

flask of holy oil, which was supposed to have been brought there by an angel, and which must always be used in the crowning of the French kings at Rheims.



GARLANDS OF WILD FLOWERS

One summer day, when Jeanne was about thirteen years old, she was sitting in the garden of her father's house. Suddenly a strange bright light shone about her and out of it there came a voice saying, "Jeanne, be good—go often to church, for you must go to France."

She could not believe that such a message was meant for her, a simple peasant girl, who had never left her own village.

Yet she felt that the voice was from Heaven,

JEANNE'S VOICES

and after hearing it the third time she knew it must be the voice of the angel, St Michael, who told her that St Catherine and St Margaret would also come to help her.

Soon after this Jeanne with some other girls of the village, who were watching the sheep in the meadow, ran a race for a bunch of flowers or some such prize. She won so easily and ran so fleetly that to those looking on, her feet did not seem to touch the ground. When the race was over, and Jeanne was resting at the far end of the meadow, a youth appeared near her and said, "Jeanne, go home, for your mother says she needs you."

Believing it was her brother who spoke, or some boy of the village, she went home in a hurry.

Her mother met her and scolded her, asking why she had come home and left the sheep.

"Did you not send for me?" she asked.

"No!" replied her mother.

She was about to return to her playmates, believing that some one had played a trick upon her, and may indeed have reached the quiet place where the sheep were feeding unguarded, when suddenly a bright cloud passed before her eyes, and from the cloud came a voice saying that she must change her course of life and do marvellous deeds, for the King of Heaven had chosen her to aid the King of France. She must wear man's dress, take up arms, and be a captain in the war, and all would obey her advice.

The Maid was at first overcome, but she hid these things in her heart and told no one of her visions and voices.

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

During the next three or four years the voices came many times to her in the woods, or when she listened to church bells, or in her own garden, and on the hillside. They even



FROM THE CLOUD CAME A VOICE

bade her go to Robert de Baudricourt, Captain of Vaucouleurs, who would give her soldiers to drive the enemy from the town of Orleans.

"But," cried Jeanne, "I am only a poor girl, who cannot ride or be a leader in war."

She felt she could never do so great a deed; but she went more often to church, though the village boys laughed at her for it. And St Catherine and St Margaret spoke many times to her.

"I saw them," said Jeanne, "with my bodily eyes, and when they departed I used to weep and wish they would take me with them."

At last Jeanne knew that she had indeed

GOOD-BYE TO DOMRÉMY

been chosen by God to help the Dauphin, and give him back his kingdom, and cause him to be crowned at Rheims.

She therefore determined to journey as soon



"BUT," CRIED JEANNE, "I AM ONLY A POOR GIRL"

as possible to Vaucouleurs to ask Robert de Baudricourt to take her to the Dauphin. Yet she still told no one of her voices or her plans.

CHAPTER III GOOD-BYE TO DOMRÉMY

THE chance came early in 1428. Her cousin, Durand Lassois (whom she always called Uncle, because he was so much older than she was), lived near Vaucouleurs, and

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

when he came to Domrémy on a visit Jeanne begged him to take her back with him, making the excuse that she could help his wife, who was in poor health.

Now Lassois had always been fond of Jeanne and was ready enough to take her back with him, so it was agreed she should go.

On the way there she began to tell him of her voices, and said she felt that God had called her to go to the Dauphin and to cause him to be crowned at Rheims.

Lassois was amazed at her words and almost thought the girl had taken leave of her senses; and when she went on to beg him to take her to Baudricourt, he said such a journey was utterly useless.

"But," said Jeanne, "did you never hear that France is to be made desolate by a woman [meaning the wicked Queen Isabella], and restored by a Maid [meaning herself]?"

Now this saying was well known in all the countryside, and Lassois felt that maybe Jeanne's words were true. From that time he believed in her and promised to take her to Baudricourt.

When he first entered the hall of the castle at Vaucouleurs he left Jeanne outside in the courtyard. As Lassois had expected, Baudricourt was in no mood to receive Jeanne's message.

"The little fool," he said to Lassois; "box her ears and send her home to her mother."

And Lassois was forced to leave the hall without having been any help to Jeanne.

GOOD-BYE TO DOMRÉMY

But the Maid was not discouraged and said, "Take me to him, I must see him myself."

And at last, on May 13, 1428, Baudricourt said he would see her. So, dressed in her shabby red frock, and with bare feet, the brave Maid entered the great Castle hall where a crowd of men-at-arms and knights had gathered. She showed no signs of fear, but stepped forward and asked Baudricourt to send to the Dauphin, telling him to guard himself well and not go to battle with his foes, for the Lord would send him aid before the middle of Lent of the next year.

"I come in the name of the Lord," went on Jeanne; "the Kingdom of France belongs to my Lord, and my Lord will have the Dauphin to be King. In spite of his enemies, I will lead him to Rheims to be crowned."

"Who is this Lord of yours?" asked Robert.

"The King of Heaven," answered Jeanne.

"The girl is crazed," said Robert. "Why do you bring her here? Take her home." And he would listen no longer to her.

It seemed that Jeanne's journey had been in vain, and she therefore had to return to Domrémy, though she was by no means discouraged. She now began to talk openly at Domrémy of her mission, and her father and mother were very troubled at her words.

"You shall never go with men-at-arms," said her father angrily, for he remembered that in a dream he had once seen her surrounded by soldiers. "I would rather see you drowned; indeed I would do it with my own hands."

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

So there was nothing for it but for Jeanne to go quietly on with her work at home. She could no longer talk of her voices there, but she still believed that God would send help to the Dauphin by her before Lent the next year.



"YOU SHALL NEVER GO WITH MEN-AT-ARMS," SAID HER FATHER ANGRILY

Once, however, she said to Michael Lebuin, a boy about her own age, "There is a girl between Coussey and Vaucouleurs who, in less than a year from now, will cause the Dauphin to be anointed King of France."

When the boy spoke of this to others, many of them mocked at her and said that such thoughts were evil and like unto witchcraft, and must have come to her when she had made merry beneath the Fairy Tree.

Jeanne's voices seemed now more clear than ever, bidding her delay no longer. It was January, and she had promised the Dauphin help by March.

GOOD-BYE TO DOMRÉMY

She therefore begged Lassois to let her go to his house again to help his wife with her young baby. Even her father thought it best she should go, and she set out.



JEANNE ONCE MORE LEFT HER HOME AT DOMRÉMY

"Good-bye," she cried to her friends as she passed their cottages. "I go to Vaucouleurs. Farewell, Menette," she added to another girl-companion. "God bless thee." But she had not the heart to say good-bye to Hauvette, her dearest friend, who, when she heard that Jeanne had gone, wept bitterly because she loved her so much for her goodness.

So, dressed in the same shabby red frock, Jeanne once more left her home at Domrémy, never again to return.

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

CHAPTER IV JEANNE AT VAUCOULEURS

JEANNE went with Lassois to his house, and afterwards to stay with another friend at Vaucouleurs. She saw Baudricourt at the Castle; but he scorned her, and she had to wait patiently many days, spending the time sewing and spinning.

Often she would pray in the Chapel of Our Lady in the Castle, but it seemed in vain. Baudricourt still did nothing to help her.

In February, a young man-at-arms, Jean de Metz, asked her what she was doing at Vaucouleurs, and she answered, "I am come to a Royal town to ask Robert de Baudricourt to lead me to the King. But Baudricourt cares nothing for me and for what I say; none the less I must be with the King by mid-Lent if I wear my legs down to the knees."

"No man in the world can recover the Kingdom of France, nor hath our King any help save from myself, though I would rather be sewing beside my poor mother; yet go I must, and this deed I must do, because my Lord so wills it."

"Who is your Lord?" asked Jean de Metz, almost in scorn.

"My Lord is God," said the Maid.

Suddenly the man-at-arms realized that Jeanne's words were true, and he answered, "Then I, Jean, swear to you that I, God helping

JEANNE AT VAUCOULEURS

me, will lead you to the King, and I ask, when will you go?"

"Better to-day than to-morrow, better to-morrow than later," replied Jeanne, full of hope at his words.



"I, GOD HELPING ME, WILL LEAD YOU TO THE KING"

So Jeanne set about making plans to go to the Dauphin at Chinon. Her voices spoke to her one day, telling her of fresh fighting and defeat at Orleans.

She hastened to Baudricourt at once, and said, "In God's name, you are too slow in sending me, for this day near Orleans a great disaster has befallen the gentle Dauphin, and worse fortune he will have unless you send me to him."

Now in the ordinary way this news could not have reached Baudricourt for at least several days, so he paid little heed to the Maid's words.

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

When, however, a few days later, there came a messenger saying that, on the very day the Maid had spoken, the Dauphin's army had been defeated by the English at the Battle of Herring, Baudricourt felt that Jeanne's voices must be true or that she was bewitched.



SHE AND HER KNIGHTS RODE FORTH TOWARDS CHINON

He could no longer treat her as a foolish girl, and though he did little to prepare her for the journey to the Dauphin, he at least allowed her to set out accompanied by Jean de Metz.

The people of Vaucouleurs helped her with money, and a white horse was bought for her. Jean de Metz persuaded her to change her poor shabby dress of red cloth for the tunic, vest, long breeches, boots, spurs, and cap of a page, that she might travel more safely.

Thus Jeanne rode out from Vaucouleurs, and as she did so, Baudricourt handed her a sword, saying, "Go, and let come what will."

JEANNE MEETS THE DAUPHIN

Some of her friends in Vaucouleurs were full of pity for her and said, "You should not go, all the ways are beset by rough men-at-arms."

But Jeanne had no fear and longed to be gone. "The way is made clear before me," she said to them; "I have my Lord to make the way smooth to the gentle Dauphin, and to do this deed I was born."

Then, as the darkness of evening closed round them, she and her knights rode forth towards Chinon.

CHAPTER V

JEANNE MEETS THE DAUPHIN

THEY travelled all night, and slept during the day, for fear of the wandering bands of English or Burgundian soldiers. Her one sorrow was that in this enemy country she dared not go to Mass.

She talked to her companions about her visions, saying, "Have no fear, for my voices always teach me what to do, and it is now four or five years since they bade me go to the help of France."

It was a dangerous journey, with hardship, poor food, and little rest all the time; yet Jeanne was always cheerful, and said, "You must fear nothing, because it is God who sent me, and to Him all things are possible."

One of her guard said afterwards, "To me she seemed as good as if she were a saint, and we could not have evil thoughts in our minds in her company."

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

The long weary journey was nearly finished when Jeanne stayed for a while at the little town of Fierbois, near Chinon. Here she rejoiced to find the famous Chapel of St Catherine, with its holy relics of the saint. In this chapel Jeanne prayed, and went three times to Mass. From Fierbois also she sent a letter to the Dauphin telling him she had ridden one hundred and fifty leagues to speak to him, and that she would be very useful to him. She begged to be allowed to see him, saying that she would recognize him among all others, even though she had never seen him.

Having sent this letter she rode on to Chinon, and in time appeared at the Castle gates. There she discovered that her letter had never reached the Dauphin, for he sent his messengers to ask who she was and why she came. To this she answered that she was to relieve Orleans and afterwards would lead the King to his coronation at Rheims. Therefore she must see the Dauphin.

Even then she was kept waiting two whole days while the Council and the Dauphin talked over her words. During that time of waiting she went several times to the church near at hand to pray; and at last she received word to go to the Castle.

Towards nightfall Jeanne was led into the great hall. Three hundred knights were there, and fifty flaming torches lit up the place.

Yet Jeanne in her page's suit of black and grey was not dazzled by the bright light, nor was she confused by so great a company,

JEANNE MEETS THE DAUPHIN

arrayed in velvet and cloth-of-gold and crimson and blue.

She came forward with firm step. It is even said that the courtiers tried to trick her by pointing to a richly dressed noble and saying, "See, there is the Dauphin."



"**MOST NOBLE DAUPHIN, I AM SENT BY GOD TO GIVE HELP**"

Jeanne, however, was not to be deceived, and made her way at once to the true Dauphin and said, "Most noble Dauphin, I am sent by God to give help to the kingdom and to you. God give you long life, noble king!"

"But I am not the King," said the Dauphin.

"In God's name, you are the King and no other," answered Jeanne; and she begged for troops to go to Orleans and fight for him.

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

Now this matter of his kingship had been much in the mind of the Dauphin of late, for his own mother, Isabella, had hinted that he was not the true heir to the French throne, and he longed to be certain that what Queen Isabella said was not true. He did not tell Jeanne of



"HOW CAN I BE SURE THAT YOU COME FROM GOD?" HE ASKED

these thoughts, but drew her aside to talk privately with her.

"How can I be sure that you come from God?" he asked.

"Lord Dauphin," she answered, seeming to understand his secret thoughts, "on the part of my Lord, I tell thee thou art the true son of the King Charles VI, and therefore heir to the throne."

They talked a long time, and her words

JEANNE BEGINS HER MARCH

compelled him to believe in her, for she spoke of things known only to God and himself.

Taking her back to the hall he said to all present, "She has confided to me secrets she could have gained only from God."

But although the Dauphin was ready to trust her, others were not so willing, and there was much delay. In the meantime she stayed in one part of the Castle as the guest of the Dauphin.

In vain she begged him to send her to Orleans, saying, "I have this work to do and my time is very short. My voices have warned me many times that I have but one year and a little more to live. Oh, send me ere it is too late!"

Day by day things went from bad to worse with the Dauphin's cause, yet still he delayed to send Jeanne to Orleans.

One good friend, however, came to Jeanne's side, the Duc d'Alençon, who had but recently been a prisoner in the enemy camp and was now returned to his home.

He believed in Jeanne, her spirit gave him fresh courage and he became eager to fight again for France. He gave Jeanne a horse, and together they overcame many difficulties and were true comrades to the end.

CHAPTER VI

JEANNE BEGINS HER MARCH

AT last it was decided to send Jeanne to Poitiers, to be questioned there by learned men and members of the town parliament.

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

Fretting at this delay, yet unable to refuse, Jeanne faced the Council bravely.

"What language does your voice speak?" asked one.

"A better language than yours," answered Jeanne.

"Do you believe in God?" asked another.

"More firmly than you do," replied the Maid.

"We cannot advise the King to entrust you with men-at-arms on your word alone," said they, "to risk their lives, unless you can show us a sign."

"In God's name," cried Jeanne, "I did not come to Poitiers to work miracles. Take me to Orleans and I will show you a sign, for I will raise the siege and crown the Dauphin."

To all their questions the Maid answered fearlessly, and after six weeks delay they agreed to let her go with the army.

Full of joy, Jeanne began to prepare. "I know neither A nor B," she said, "but first I must write to the English telling them to depart from Orleans. Have you paper and ink? Write as I shall tell you:

"King of England, listen to the King of Heaven. Give back to the Maid the keys of all the good towns which you have taken. She is ready to make peace if you will be just towards France.

"If you do not do this, I am captain in this war, and in whatsoever place in France I find your people, I will make them go away.

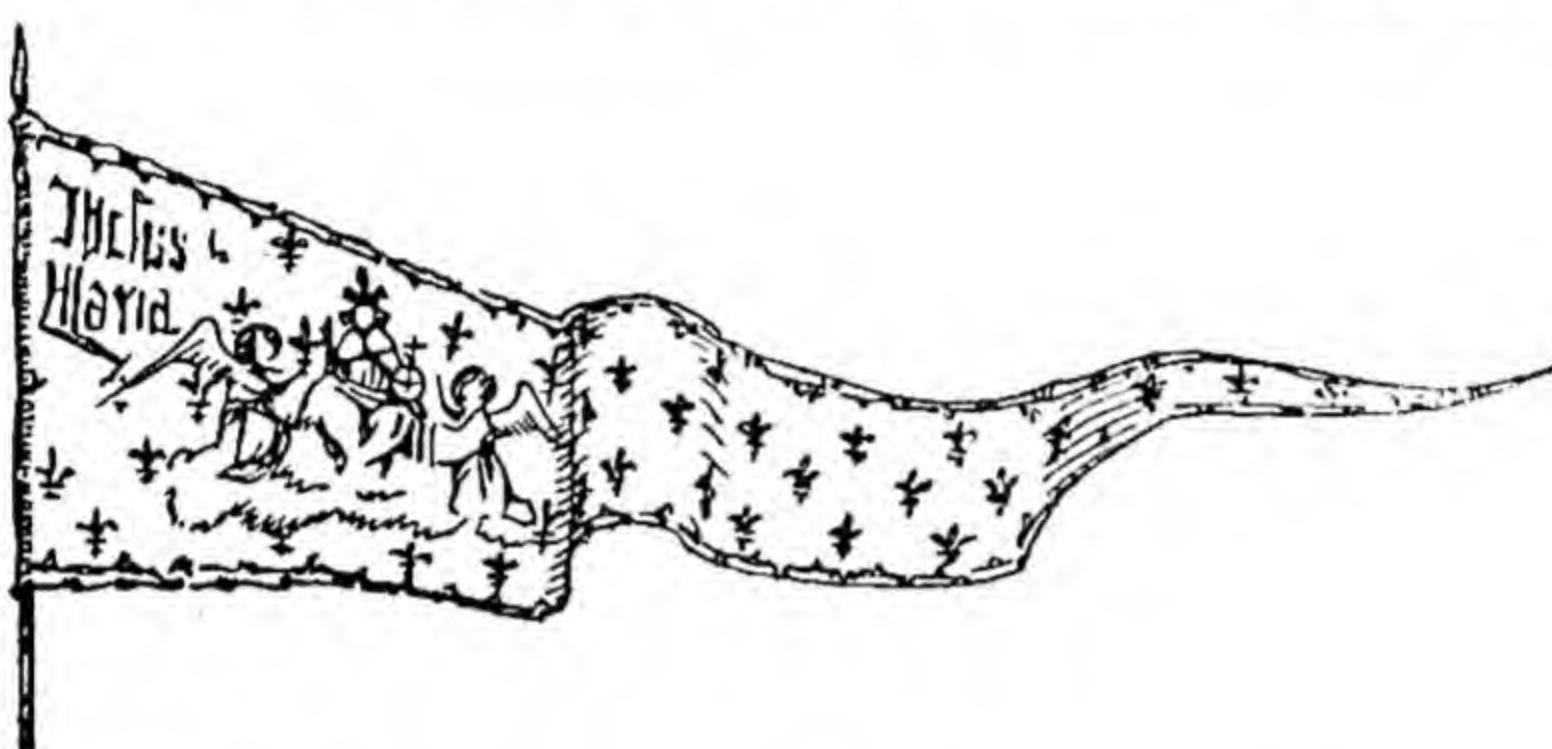
"The King of Heaven will send more strength to the Maid than you can bring

JEANNE BEGINS HER MARCH

against her and her good men-at-arms. The Maid prays and requests you to destroy no more.

“Written the Saturday of Holy Week, 1429.”

So the letter was written and sent, and Jeanne travelled on to the city of Tours to prepare for the march to Orleans. She donned



her armour of white steel, and over it she wore a cloak of cloth-of-gold and velvet. She rode upon a jet-black horse, both the horse and armour being a present from the Dauphin.

For a sword she bade them dig in the ground beneath the altar in the Chapel of St Catherine at Fierbois. There they would find a sword, old and rusty, with five crosses on the blade.

“My voice told me of it,” said Jeanne.

They found the sword even as Jeanne had said, and the rust readily fell from it. The people of Tours gave her two sheaths for it, one of red velvet and one of cloth-of-gold, but she had also a strong leather belt made for it.

Her banner was of pure white linen embroidered with lilies. On it was a figure

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

of the King of Heaven bearing the world in His hand. Two angels were kneeling beside Him, and there were written the words, "Jesus Maria."

Most likely her brothers joined her at Tours and were with her in many battles. Hers was indeed a strange army, being more like a religious procession than a company of men-at-arms. They sang hymns as they marched, and twice a day they held a service under her sacred banner.

On April 28, 1429, this strange company and a number of cattle arrived on the south bank of the River Loire, opposite the besieged city of Orleans.

CHAPTER VII JEANNE ENTERS ORLEANS

THE city was indeed in a bad state, food was almost all gone (after six months of siege), and the English had built huge towers by the walls, and from these attacked the town.

There was a fairly strong garrison in Orleans under Dunois, but the French soldiers had lost heart and felt it was impossible to overcome the enemy.

Meantime the English had received Jeanne's letter sent from Tours, and must have read it with great surprise, wondering who this Maid could be.

Jeanne wanted to fight her way across the river where the main army of the English were encamped, but the French general, Dunois,

JEANNE ENTERS ORLEANS

who had crossed by boat to meet Jeanne, said it were wiser to go upstream some five miles and enter Orleans by the Burgundian gate, which was not so well defended.

This seemed a very good plan to every one, but Jeanne was angry at her own plan being set aside. Strangely enough, however, the counsel of Dunois could scarcely be followed at the moment, for the wind was blowing so hard downstream that the boats could not make their way upstream at all.

"See," cried Jeanne, "the counsel of God is wiser and safer than yours. I bring you better rescue than ever came to knight or city, the aid of the King of Heaven."

But even as she spoke it seemed that God showed which way they should go, for at that very moment the wind suddenly changed, the sails filled, and the boats, loaded with cattle and provisions, were able to go in safety upstream to the city.

The general, Dunois, took this as a sign from God, and Jeanne also yielded, believing it to be the will of Heaven.

She crossed with a force of two hundred men-at-arms. The wind was now so much in their favour that each vessel towed two others, which every one said was a marvellous thing, a miracle of God.

Under cover of night, on April 29, Jeanne, riding beside Dunois, entered Orleans attended by torch-bearers and troops. Multitudes had gone out to meet her, and as she rode through the throng, they rejoiced as if they saw God

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

descend among them; for they had suffered much, and, what is worse, had little hope of aid, so feared they would lose their lives and all they possessed.

But now they were comforted, as if the siege were already over. Lovingly they gazed on Jeanne—the men, women, and children alike.



MULTITUDES HAD GONE OUT TO MEET HER

They pressed round her to touch her as she rode. So much so, that a torch-bearer came too near her standard and it caught fire. Instantly she set spurs to her horse, turned it cleverly, and crushed out the flames as easily as if she had been long used to wars.

They led her rejoicing to the Church of the Holy Rood, where she gave thanks to God, and went afterwards to a friend's house near the great English camp. There she was glad to rest for the night, sharing her bed with a little girl of nine years, the daughter of her friend who owned the house.

JEANNE'S FIRST VICTORY

CHAPTER VIII

JEANNE'S FIRST VICTORY

EVERY one in Orleans was overjoyed and cheered by the arrival of the Maid, and though she did not wish any fighting to take place till she had tried to persuade the English to leave the walls of Orleans peaceably, yet so eager were the soldiers and townsfolk that Jeanne had hard work to keep them back.

She at once sent her two heralds, Guienne and Ambleville, with a letter addressed to the King of England, bidding the generals depart from Orleans or she would drive them out by force.

The English made light of the letter, and sent back Ambleville saying they intended to burn Guienne for being the messenger of the witch.

It is said, however, that they kept Guienne in prison, where he was found in irons, when the English were driven from Orleans.

As they had not answered her letter, Jeanne appeared that night upon the walls of the city, directly opposite the English fortress of Les Tourelles, and cried, "Surrender, in the name of God, and I will grant your lives."

But they only shouted in return "Milkmaid! If ever we get you, you shall be burnt alive."

The next day was Sunday, and Jeanne rode through the city with her knights and squires, for the people had been so eager to see her that they almost broke in the door of her house.

She would not lead them to battle on that day, however, but spent the time in prayer.

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

Afterwards she rode boldly through the Renard gate, crying to the English soldiers, "Surrender, and you will be spared. In God's name, go back to England or you will suffer for it."

"Would you have us yield to a woman?" they answered scornfully, and she went back to the city.

Two days later more provisions and men were brought to Orleans by Dunois. He also brought news that Sir John Fastolf, who had defeated the French at the Battle of Herrings, was marching towards Orleans with more men and supplies for the English.

"In God's name, let me know as soon as he arrives," said Jeanne.

"Fear not," said Dunois, "I will most surely let you know."

Then the Maid, weary with her long ride round the walls, lay down to sleep, while her squire, d'Aulon, also fell asleep.

Now, as they slept, the English secretly began an attack upon Orleans.

Suddenly Jeanne leaped up, and waking d'Aulon cried, "In God's name, my voices tell me that I must go against the English, but I know not whether it is against their forts or against Fastolf."

D'Aulon began to buckle on her armour with all haste, for there was now much noise and confusion in the street.

"Hasten," cried the Maid to her page. "Where is my horse? The blood of my soldiers is being shed."

Springing on her horse, she grasped her

JEANNE'S FIRST VICTORY

banner, handed to her through the upper window, and galloped off to the gate where the struggle seemed most fierce. D'Aulon and



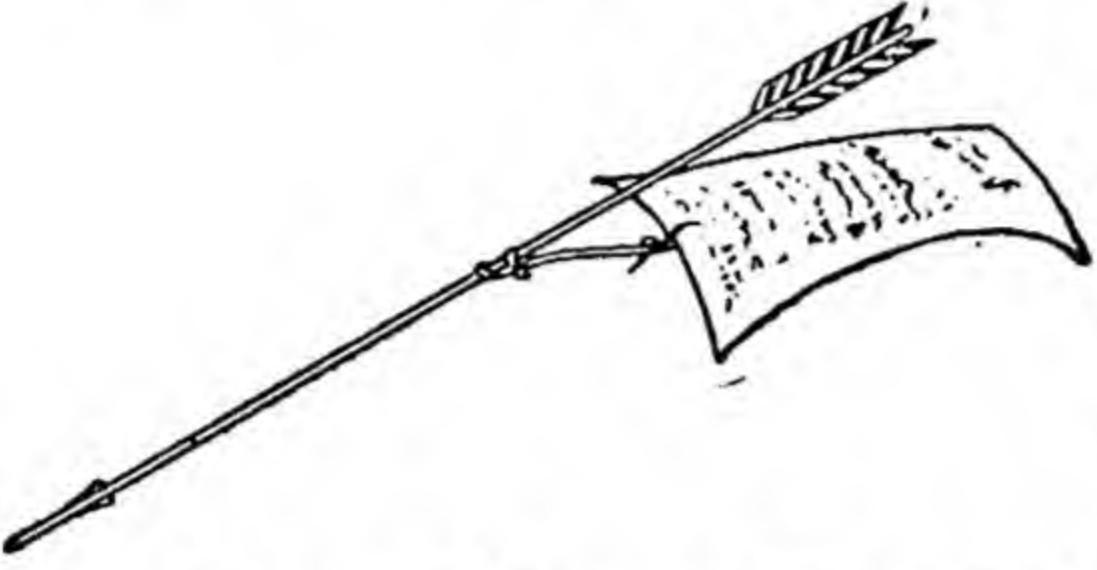
SPRINGING ON HER HORSE, SHE GRASPED HER BANNER
AND GALLOPED OFF

her page soon overtook her. They reached the English fort, and her soldiers quickly rallied round her. For three hours the struggle went on; but at last the English were driven back, and the Maid returned to Orleans, rejoicing in

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

her victory but sad and weeping that so many English had died without a chance to pray to their priests.

The next day was the Feast of the Ascension, and Jeanne said no fighting was to take place;



but she sent a letter to the English which said, "Ye men of England, who have no right in France, leave your forts and return to your

country. If ye will not, I will make so great a noise as shall remain for ever in the memory of man. This I write for the third and last time."

The letter was tied to an arrow, and an archer at Jeanne's side shot it across to the English fort. As they read her message they shouted evil words to insult her, and she returned to the city much saddened.

But her voices came to comfort her, bidding her rest assured that evil words could not harm her cause.

CHAPTER IX

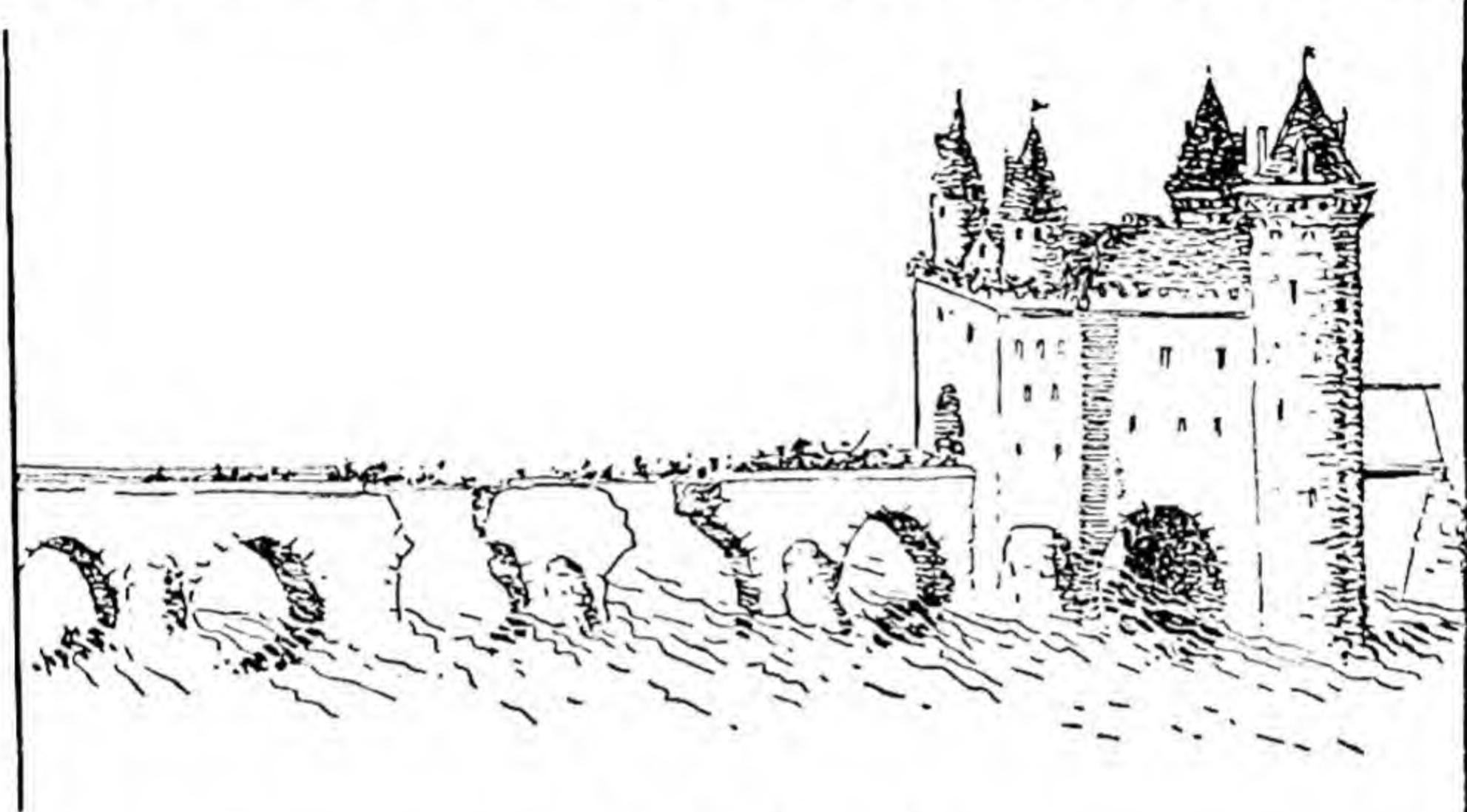
THE STORMING OF LES TOURELLES

NOW the greatest stronghold of the English was a stone fort called Les Tourelles. It was made of double towers built on an arch of the bridge across the river. Another arch, on the Orleans side, had been destroyed, so that the French could not easily reach the fortress. Les Tourelles was made still stronger by walls,

THE STORMING OF LES TOURELLES

and on the farther side a drawbridge led to a wide road, protected also against enemies by high walls and a deep ditch.

The French soldiers were ready enough to begin the attack on Les Tourelles, but their



LES TOURELLES

generals felt it unwise to risk such a venture and they barred the gates leading from the city. Soon, however, the white figure of Jeanne rode into their midst, crying, "My people shall go and will succeed."

The gates were therefore thrown open and, as Jeanne called to her soldiers, they all passed out of the city.

They crossed the river by a bridge of boats and began to attack the outer English fort of the Augustins. On came more French soldiers. They climbed the high walls but were driven back.

Again Jeanne cheered them on, crying, "Forward! Forward boldly!" And for a time they were successful, but soon they had to

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

retreat once more and Jeanne rode back to Orleans weary and disappointed. She had been wounded in the foot, but she was still undaunted, and said to her men-at-arms, "Rise with the dawn and you will do better to-morrow. Keep close to me for I shall have much to do, more than ever I had, and blood will flow from my body."

At sunrise Jeanne rose and went to Mass. Then she and her knights crossed the water again by boat; every man and weapon that could be spared was pressed into the fight. The English, too, had guns and bows and arrows in plenty, and were very determined.

It seemed impossible for the French to scale the high walls of the fort, and the English drove them back many times. But the Maid's white banner floated always close by the walls and she cheered on her soldiers, crying, "Doubt not, the place is ours!"

Then ladders were placed against the walls, and as Jeanne scaled the first one she was wounded in the shoulder, and she fell. Hastily her page and squire carried her to a safer place, and, taking off part of her armour, they dressed the wound with oil, leaving her for a while alone.

Then her voices came to comfort and encourage her, and she was soon back in her place among the weary soldiers. "Fight on," she cried; "you will enter very soon, the English shall have no more power over you."

The English, seeing her again in the front of the battle, in spite of her wound, thought

THE STORMING OF LES TOURELLES

she must indeed have the power of witchcraft, and suddenly fear fell upon them all.

At this, one of the French soldiers seized the standard of the Maid, which had been waving by the wall, and began to climb to the top of the rampart, saying, "Bring up your ladders, the English are well-nigh done for."



THEY DRESSED THE WOUND WITH OIL

"Watch," said Jeanne, to a knight at her side; "watch till my standard touches the top of the rampart."

A moment passed, then some one cried, "Jeanne, the flag touches."

"Then enter and all is yours," she answered. Immediately, caring neither for arrows or bullets, the multitude of French soldiers rushed on the wall. Every scaling-ladder was thronged, and swords and axes were used; never had there been such an attack.

In a short time the English fled to the wooden drawbridge, hoping to take refuge in the last fort of the Tourelles itself. But the knights of Orleans had already towed a flaming barge under the bridge and it was now a mass

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

of flames. Crackling under their feet, and with tongues of fire shooting through the planks, it became the bridge of death. The English fell

headlong into the stream below, and the weight of their armour drew them down, and they were drowned.



HCA

SHE KNELT WEEPING AND PRAYED

she knelt weeping and praying for the souls of her enemies.

So Les Tourelles was taken, and the joy-bells of Orleans sounded across the dark waters of the Loire, lit up now by the flames of the burning drawbridge. Orleans was delivered, and the hopes of the English were for ever shattered. In less than a week the peasant girl of seventeen years had won one of the most surprising battles of all time.

CHAPTER X

THE BATTLE OF PATHAY

THE next day was Sunday, and Jeanne willed that no fighting should take place on the Sabbath, though at dawn the English came out of their tents in battle array.

Then the Maid arose from bed, and for armour wore only a coat of mail; she bade

THE BATTLE OF PATHAY

Dunois build an altar by the river-side in full view of both armies, and she and all her soldiers worshipped.

Afterwards Jeanne asked which way the English were turned.

“They are turned away down the river,” said her men.

“Let them go,” she answered. “Our Lord does not wish us to attack them to-day.”

Two days later, though scarcely recovered from her wound, Jeanne set out for Tours, there to see the Dauphin. As she rode into the town the Maid bowed to her saddle-bow to him; but the King bade her sit erect, and it was thought by some he would have liked to kiss her, so glad was he.

She tried to persuade him to go at once to Rheims to be crowned, but he seemed too lazy to exert himself, and dawdled so long, and held such lengthy councils, to which Jeanne was not asked, that she grew impatient.

One day she knocked at the door of the Council Room, then entered and, kneeling before the Dauphin, cried, “Noble Dauphin, why do you hold such long councils? Come to Rheims, and be crowned; my voices insist on it. Go—go—go! I will be your helper, go!”

The Dauphin was moved by her eagerness, and promised that when the road to Rheims was safe, and the English driven back from the river, he would go with her to be crowned.

So Jeanne set out to clear the way; fresh troops joined her men, and the French were strong of heart. In a letter written by one of

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

the nobles to his mother he said, “I saw her mount her horse all in white armour, but without a helmet; a small battle-axe was in her hand, and a page rode beside her with her standard.”

Jeanne showed great courage, and all were amazed at her skill and eagerness, for she did more work than two or three of the most famous men-at-arms could have done.

At the town of Jargeau she was climbing one of the scaling-ladders at the walls when a stone crashed down from the battlement, and she fell to the earth; but was up again in a moment, crying, “On, friends, on! Within an hour the English are ours.”

These words so cheered the soldiers that they fought with more spirit than before; the town was taken and the English fled to the bridges, while Suffolk, their leader, was captured.

Two days later she set out for Meun, where the English were in command; but they left the town at the first sight of her army, and were soon in full retreat towards Paris, though they were hidden from their pursuers by the thick woods of the plain of the River Beauce.

When some of the soldiers asked Jeanne where the English were she said, “Ride boldly on, you will have guidance.” So on they rode.

Still there was no sight of the enemy. Then, turning to the Duke of Alençon, her favourite knight, Jeanne said, “Have you spurs?”

“What!” said Alençon; “are we to turn our backs and flee?”

“No, indeed,” replied Jeanne; “but the

THE BATTLE OF PATHAY

English will not defend themselves, and you will need good spurs to follow them."

Still there was no sight of the enemy.

Then, on a sudden, a stag, startled by the French knights who rode ahead of the army, rushed through the wood and must have dashed full into the English camp. At sight of the



"RIDE BOLDLY ON"

stag, and not dreaming the French were near, the English set up a loud huntsmen's "View Halloo!"—and shot at the animal.

The French scouting party immediately drew bridle, and some of their number rode back quietly to the Maid with the message—"Found!"

Giving hasty orders to her soldiers, Jeanne and the army charged into the midst of the English, who fled in confusion, but not before their leader, Talbot, had been taken prisoner.

So ended the great Battle of Pathay.

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

CHAPTER XI

THE DAUPHIN IS CROWNED

JEANNE rode back in triumph to Orleans, but her greatest difficulty now was to rouse the Dauphin to go to Rheims.



HER GREATEST DIFFICULTY WAS TO ROUSE THE DAUPHIN

He greeted her kindly, praised her great daring, and bade her take a rest after her great labours.

This, however, was furthest from her thoughts, and she wept bitter tears that the Dauphin should care so little for his crown.

"Have no doubt," she cried, "you shall recover all your kingdom and shall shortly be crowned."

Still he delayed and held long councils, but at last, on June 29, he set out with Jeanne and

THE DAUPHIN IS CROWNED

the army towards Rheims. At Troyes the Dauphin's troops were strongly opposed and it seemed that the army must retreat.

"Gentle King of France," said Jeanne, "if you are ready to wait beside the town of Troyes, in two days it shall be yours."

"Two days," said the Archbishop of Rheims, who was with the Dauphin. "Jeanne, we could wait for six days if we were certain to have the town, but is it certain?"

"Doubt it not!" replied the Maid.

At once the army set off, she riding among them, giving orders to collect faggots and anything that could serve as a shelter for them while they attacked.

All that night she planned and worked, till by early morning everything was ready for storming the town.

When the people of Troyes saw from the walls all that had been prepared they were smitten with fear.

Then Jeanne cried in her girl's voice, "To the Assault!"

It was enough. The townsfolk sent their Bishop at once to make terms of peace, and thus, without any fighting, the town of Troyes was won, and the Dauphin entered in triumph.

The Archbishop of Rheims, seeing how everywhere the Maid was victorious, wrote to the people of his town of Rheims and advised them to yield to the Dauphin.

The whole march to Rheims was one of victory, the keys of Chilon and other towns were given up to the Dauphin, and on July 16

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

he entered Rheims. The people of the town vowed to be loyal to him, and it was agreed that he should be crowned the next day as Charles VII.

All through the night the priests and people were busy preparing for the coronation. From the cathedral treasury a crown was brought, and at nine o'clock on July 17 the ceremony began. This is how it was described in a letter written by one of the nobles:

"First, all in armour and with banner flying, the Marshal and Admiral with a great company of men-at-arms rode forth to meet the Abbot, who bore in his hand the vessel containing the holy oil.

"They rode into the minster and alighted at the entrance to the choir. The Archbishop of Rheims crowned and anointed the King while all the people cried, 'Noel!' The trumpets sounded so that you might think that the roofs would be rent. And always the Maid stood next to the King, her standard in her hand. A right fair thing it was to see the goodly manners of the King and the Maid.

"When the Dauphin had been crowned and consecrated, the Maid bent and embraced his knees, weeping for joy and saying these words, 'Gentle King, now is accomplished the Will of God, who decreed that I should raise the siege of Orleans and bring you to this city of Rheims to be crowned, showing that you are true king and that France should be yours.'

"And right great pity came upon all those who saw her and many wept."

THE DAUPHIN IS CROWNED

Jeanne now felt that the work her voices had bidden her to do was finished, and she would gladly have gone back to her humble life at Domrémy; but this was not to be. She was too valuable to the King; though in the months that followed he no longer trusted



"GENTLE KING, NOW IS ACCOMPLISHED THE WILL OF GOD"

her as before, nor allowed her to decide the way they should take.

Her father, with others from Domrémy, had come to Rheims to see her ride in triumph beside the King, and a present of money was given to him in honour of Jeanne's victories. From that time, too, the people of Domrémy and Greuse were allowed freedom from all taxes and tribute, "for the sake of the Maid."

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

CHAPTER XII

THE MARCH ON PARIS

IT had been decided that the King should march on the next day towards Paris, which the English still held, and which he could certainly have taken had he gone straight on.

But four days were wasted at Rheims talking with messengers, who had arrived from the Duke of Burgundy with supposed plans for peace. The Duke, however, was merely trying to gain time to collect a larger army together under the Duke of Bedford at Paris, and had no intention of making peace.

Jeanne grew impatient at this delay, she was anxious to march on Paris, and at last persuaded the King to set out. But he soon turned back again towards the River Loire, giving as his excuse that the Duke of Burgundy had promised to give Paris into his hands in fifteen days.

Jeanne did not believe in Burgundy's promise, but she held loyally to the King. The retreat, however, was cut short by a party of the English, and the King's army had once more to march towards Paris, Jeanne and d'Alençon riding ahead with some of the troops. They reached Compiègne, which was soon taken by Jeanne. Other towns also yielded to her, and they journeyed on to St Denys.

To Jeanne's great sorrow the King tarried behind, and did not appear for a whole fortnight, and then said that Jeanne could lead her own army to attack Paris, while he went back to a place called Senlis.

THE MARCH ON PARIS

At about two o'clock in the afternoon d'Alençon and the Maid began the attack on Paris, but the other French leaders were not anxious to fight and kept out of the struggle.

There were two moats round the walls, one full of water and the other dry. Jeanne stood upon the ridge between these two, calling to her men to attack, for the place was theirs for the winning. All the afternoon she stood there with her standard-bearer urging on her men.

At nightfall an English Bowman shot an arrow, wounding Jeanne in the leg, and with another he slew her standard-bearer at her side.

They placed her under cover beside the moat, and though unable to lead her men, she kept calling to them, until long after nightfall, to charge. At last she was carried to the camp, weeping and crying, "Oh, the pity of it; if only they had gone on till morning, Paris would have been ours."

In spite of her wound she rose early the next morning, saying, "I will never retreat till I have the town."

This encouraged her men, and they began to march forward; but as they did so, fifty or sixty horsemen rode up.

At first all thought they were come to help Jeanne, but they proved to be messengers from the King, bearing orders that fighting was to be stopped, and the Maid must return at once to St Denys. Though sick at heart that her plans were thus so rudely set aside, she could do nothing but obey the King's orders, and they reached St Denys only to find the King

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

less inclined to attack than ever; and three days later, on September 13, he retreated still farther, to Gien, a town on the River Loire.

Before leaving St Denys, however, the Maid went to the Cathedral and, with breaking



LAID HER ARMOUR BEFORE THE ALTAR OF OUR LADY

heart, laid her armour before the altar of Our Lady, as if she realized that her days of triumph were over. And though later she did lead her soldiers to battle once again, yet never more was she to succeed as at Orleans.

At Gien, the King set up his Court, and Jeanne had to stay there with him. Her comrade, d'Alençon, was sent home, and one by one her chief soldiers had to leave her side.

And thus was the will of the Maid broken and the royal army weakened.

JEANNE TAKEN CAPTIVE

CHAPTER XIII JEANNE TAKEN CAPTIVE

JEANNE'S life at Gien was now very fretful to her, for she longed most of all to drive the English out of France and bring the whole country to the King's side. But Charles would not listen to her pleading, and she was forced to stay with the King at Court, where the Queen Isabella had now joined Charles.

She was well treated, being dressed like a prince, and was in favour with both the King and Queen. Charles also gave her a mantle of gold to wear over her armour.

The people of the town were very friendly, and women everywhere loved her and were ever ready to ask her advice on all kinds of questions, expecting her almost to work miracles to help them.

About this time Charles sent word to Jeanne that she might collect an army and attack several towns held by the English; but troops, ammunition, and money were scarce and Jeanne's task seemed impossible. Nothing daunted, however, she set to work bravely, and from villages round about a small army was raised.

She then made her way to the town of St Pierre le Montier. The first attack failed and her soldiers fled in disorder. Jeanne, however, scorned to retreat, and d'Aulon, the chief of her own soldiers, was amazed to see Jeanne, with only four or five men (her brothers

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

probably among them) left behind on the wall, trying to bridge the moat.

In spite of the wound he had received, d'Aulon mounted his horse and rode hastily back to her.

"What are you doing?" he cried. "Why do you not retreat? What can you do here alone?"

Raising the visor of her helmet she answered, "I am not alone; with me are fifty thousand, and I will not retreat till I have taken the town."

"Whatever she might say, she had only four or five men with her," said d'Aulon, when speaking of the matter. "I urged her to retire, but she bade me tell the men to bring faggots and so bridge the moat, and she herself gave the same order in a loud voice."

Then, to the astonishment of d'Aulon and others who watched, the thing was done in a moment, and the town was stormed and won.

Further success, however, was not to be hers. She had neither money nor food for her troops; the weather was bitterly cold, and her soldiers had lost heart. After a month's siege she was forced to return to Court, where some of the King's counsellors tried to blame her for the defeat of her plans.

Jeanne passed many unhappy days of inaction during that winter. On every side she heard of towns and villages ruined and burnt by the English. Yet she could do nothing while the lazy Charles wasted his time trying to make peace with the Duke of Burgundy.

JEANNE TAKEN CAPTIVE

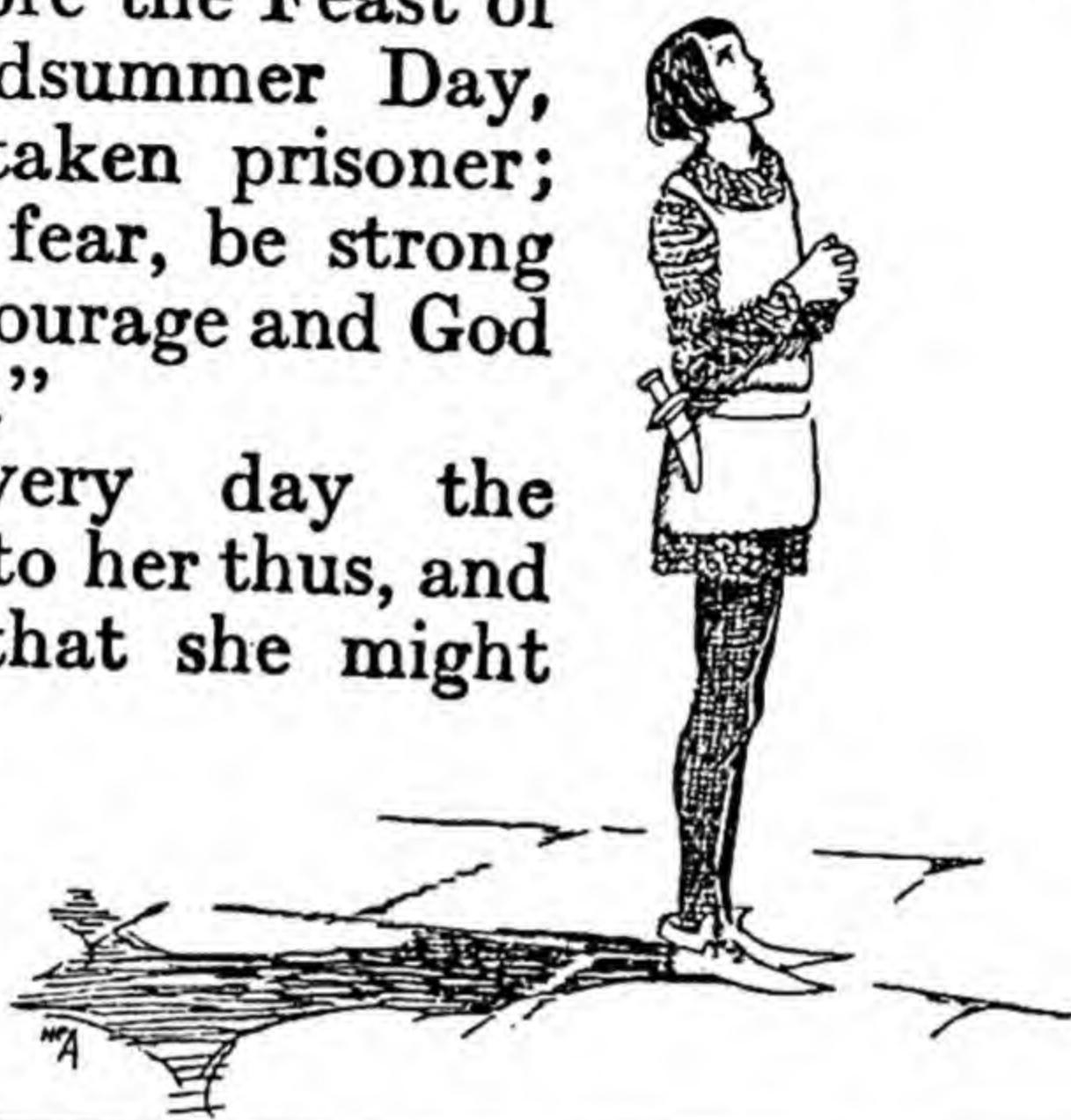
One April day, however, with a few faithful men-at-arms she rode forth to Melun, where she defeated an English force. While standing on the ramparts of this town she seemed to hear her voices speaking very plainly to her saying, "Before the Feast of St John, Midsummer Day, you will be taken prisoner; but have no fear, be strong and of good courage and God will help you."

Almost every day the voices spoke to her thus, and she prayed that she might die rather than be long a captive; but the voices said that she would indeed be a captive.

About this time the King was pleased to honour Jeanne, her father and mother, and her brothers by making them nobles of France, "because of the many favours and mighty deeds done by our well-beloved Maid Jeanne d'Arc."

In May of the same year Charles realized that the Duke of Burgundy had no intention of making peace, but was merely delaying the last battles till new troops could be brought from England to Paris.

Fighting therefore broke out again, and the



SHE PRAYED THAT SHE MIGHT DIE

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

Burgundians wanted first of all to capture Compiègne and thus weaken the French before they could reach Paris.

The Burgundians therefore encamped near Compiègne, and Jeanne, hearing of this, decided to go to help the townsfolk.

Riding hurriedly through forest-paths not yet occupied by the enemy, she entered the town about sunrise on May 23. She spent the day preparing for an attack on Margny, where the first part of the enemy army lay, and at nightfall she started out with about five hundred men.

She reached the village, and at first all went well. Suddenly a party of enemy riders under Jean de Luxembourg appeared. Twice she forced them back, but fresh soldiers came up and Jeanne's little band was soon separated from her other troops. At this her men became alarmed, and fled back in disorder to Compiègne, with the enemy following close upon them.

The governor of the town at once ordered the drawbridge to be raised and the gates closed, that the enemy might not enter; nor dare the French on the ramparts shoot their arrows lest they killed their own men, so great was the confusion outside the walls.

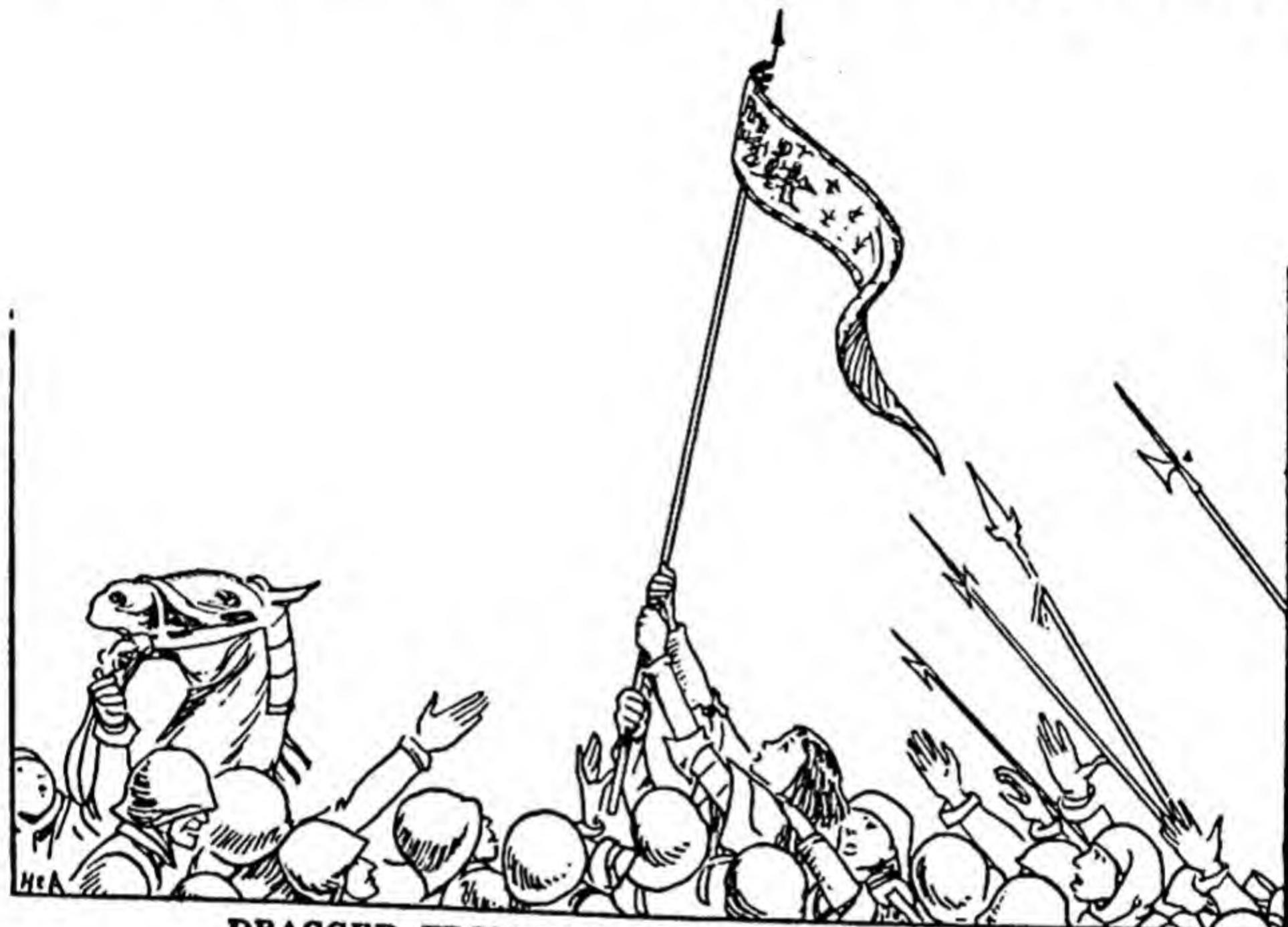
Jeanne's little band was thus cut off, and she was forced to turn aside into the meadows. Only d'Aulon, her brothers, and two or three more were with her, but they fought desperately.

Her bright scarlet cloak, embroidered with gold, and her white standard were so easily seen, even in the fading light, that she was

THE TRIAL OF JEANNE

soon surrounded, dragged from her horse, and captured.

When asked to yield she held her banner above her head and cried, "I have given my



DRAGGED FROM HER HORSE AND CAPTURED

faith to another than you, and I will keep my oath!" Thus was the brave Maid led away amid the shouts of the enemy soldiers, and that same night she was sold to Jean de Luxembourg and taken to his castle at Beaulieu.

CHAPTER XIV THE TRIAL OF JEANNE

THE people of Compiègne wept when they heard that their courageous leader had been captured, and the church-bells were rung to show their alarm and sorrow.

THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC

In some towns the people prayed that Jeanne might be saved from the enemy. At Tours the townsmen walked barefoot in a procession, singing a sad chant, and at Rheims her many friends continued to plead for her welfare; but it is strange that neither the King, for whom she had risked all, nor any other leader, made any attempt to rescue her or even to ransom her. Yet she remained loyal to Charles and would let none speak ill of him.

In Paris the English lit bonfires to show their joy at Jeanne's capture, but the French seemed to have forgotten her and all she had done for their land.

She was treated as a prisoner of war, and d'Aulon was allowed to be with her as her squire at the castle, where she remained for a fortnight.

One day d'Aulon said to her, "That poor town of Compiègne, which you loved so dearly, will now be in the hands of the enemies of France."

"It shall not be," cried Jeanne; "for no places which the King of Heaven has put in the hands of the gentle King Charles by my aid, shall be retaken by his enemies while he does his best to keep them."

While at the castle she tried to escape, but was caught by a gaoler and taken back. After this she was sent to another fortress forty miles away.

Here she was treated kindly. All the ladies of the castle fell in love with her, and tried to persuade her to change her boy's clothes for more beautiful gowns, but she said, "It is not yet time; when God wills it I will do so."

THE TRIAL OF JEANNE

When it was told her that if the town of Compiègne were taken all in it over seven years of age were to be killed, she said, "I would rather die than live after such a massacre of good people."

And though her voices bade her bear all these tidings well, for God would help the people of Compiègne, Jeanne was so troubled that she resolved on a desperate attempt to escape.



SHE TRIED TO ESCAPE

Going to the battlements of the tower, sixty feet in height, she leaped down and fell to the ground below.

Yet, as if by a miracle, she was not killed. Not even were any bones broken, though she was stunned and bruised, and for two days could take no food.

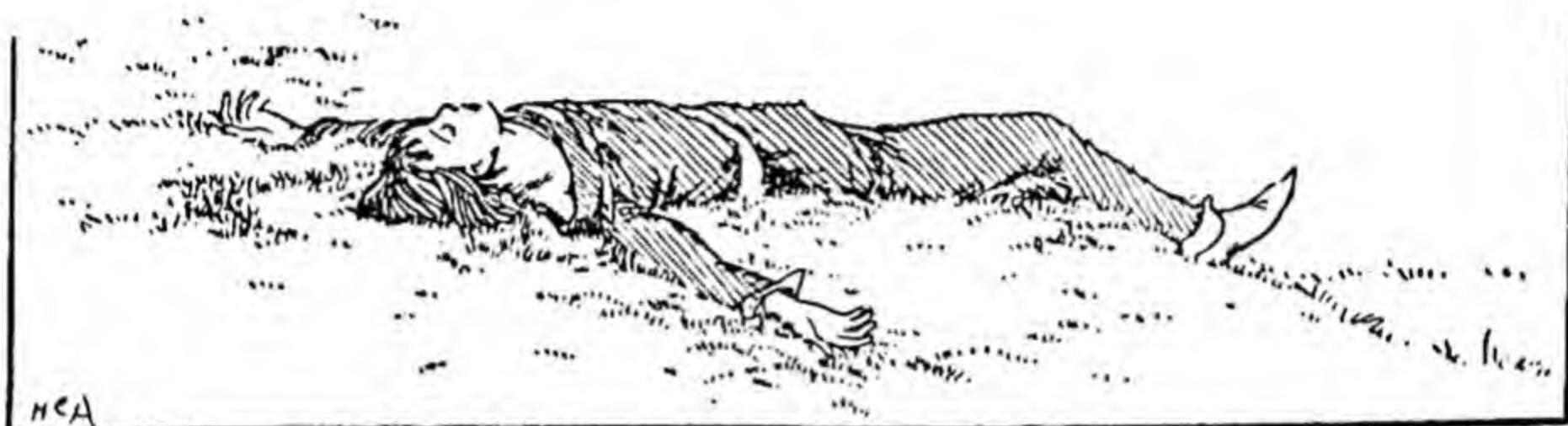
As she lay ill St Catherine appeared to comfort her, and told her that the people of Compiègne would receive help before Martinmas. (This really came true, though Jeanne was not there to see it.)

Jeanne had often said she would rather die

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than fall into the hands of the English. Yet, before long, she was indeed sold to the English for six thousand francs—the price of a prince's ransom.

They carried her away to Rouen Castle, governed by the Duke of Bedford, where she was imprisoned, being placed in a dark cell, fettered



AS IF BY A MIRACLE SHE WAS NOT KILLED

and in irons. There was now no chance of escape, nor anybody to treat her kindly.

Here for five months she was chained by hands, feet, and waist to a heavy log. Even when asleep she was kept in irons and, with two pairs of fetters, locked to the bed.

Here, too, she had to endure the taunts and insults of the cruel English soldiers, who looked upon this brave Maid as a witch.

One day the Duke of Luxembourg came to visit her, pretending he was going to ransom her. "Jeanne," he said, "I will have you ransomed if you will promise never to bear arms against us any more."

"You have no such power," she cried. "I know that the English will kill me, believing after I am dead they will be able to win all the kingdom of France; but, if there were a

THE TRIAL OF JEANNE

hundred thousand more than there are, they shall never win the kingdom of France."

At the end of February, Cauchon, the Bishop of Beauvais, an English Council, and many



THE DUKE OF LUXEMBOURG CAME TO VISIT HER

other cruel, learned men, gathered together in the chapel at Rouen Castle to try the young peasant girl Jeanne as a witch.

On this cold February morning Jeanne was led into the chapel. She had asked to be allowed to go to Mass before the trial, but this was refused. When brought into court she wore a page's black suit, her hair being cut short to her neck. It seemed impossible that anyone could look upon her as a witch.

The trial lasted six whole days, and during all that time she was questioned by clever but

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unfriendly people, yet her brave spirit never faltered, and her answers were so wonderful that one English knight was heard to say, "Why was she not English, this brave girl?"

They asked her about her life at Domrémy, and said that because she had hung garlands



"THEY SAY TO ME, 'HAVE GOOD COURAGE'"

on the Fairy Tree she was therefore guilty of magic and witchcraft. They also said that because she wore man's dress she was acting against the Church. When they asked her about her voices she answered, "My voices are good, but of their messages I will not speak, nor of the secrets I told to my King."

In every way they tried to trap her, but she said always what was true, and as the days wore on it seemed as if the people of Rouen were beginning to think more kindly of Jeanne.

Her judges were disturbed by this, and the

THE DEATH OF JEANNE

Bishop then ordered that her trial should take place in the prison itself, and if any judges seemed to show favour to her, they were quickly dismissed.

Still she remained faithful to the King in spite of his cruel indifference to her sad plight. Of her voices she said, "They say to me, 'Have good courage, take thy martyrdom cheerfully and thou shalt come at length to the Kingdom of Paradise.'" Thus comforted, she said she would wait for the will of her Lord.

CHAPTER XV THE DEATH OF JEANNE

THE months spent in prison had weakened her health, and she became very ill, but still her spirit was unbroken.

For a fortnight she was left alone in the cell, but on May 9 they threatened to torture her if she would not own herself to be guilty; but she cried fearlessly, "If you kill me with all cruelty I will say no other thing. If I were in the fire I would say no more, and till death I will hold that what I have said is truth."

Her brave soul wavered once, when she signed a paper saying that her mission was false. But her strength of soul soon returned and she vowed once more that she would not submit, adding, "I have done nothing against God or the Faith."

Soon after this she was sentenced to be burned. During the last days Jeanne was tempted to wonder if her voices had really

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been true, for all her courage and suffering seemed to have been in vain.

On May 31 her guards led her out to die, arrayed in a long white gown, and on her head a mitre. She was taken through the



SHE BECAME VERY ILL

streets of Rouen to the market-place in a car drawn by four horses.

She wept as she saw the crowds, and they heard her cry, "Rouen, Rouen, is it here I must die? Rouen, Rouen, I fear that you shall yet suffer because of this."

In the market-place were three scaffolds: on one she was made to stand while a sermon was preached; her judges stood on the second scaffold; and on the third were the faggots for burning and the stake to which she was to be bound.

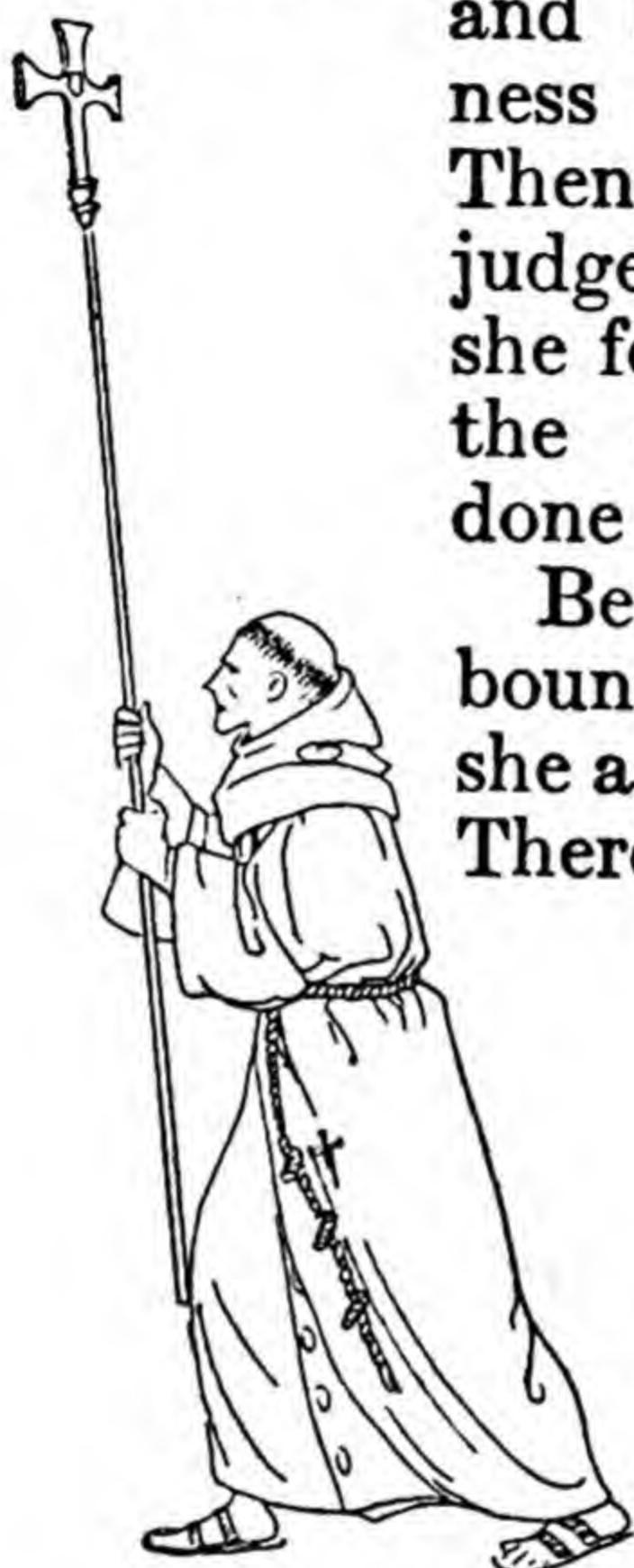
Slowly she mounted the last scaffold. As

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the crowd watched her they wept, and even her enemies, and the hard-hearted Bishop Cauchon, were moved to tears. Kneeling down she prayed to the Holy Mary and all the saints,

and begged forgiveness for her sins. Then, turning to her judges, she said that she forgave them all the evil they had done her.

Before she was bound to the stake she asked for a cross. There was none to



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▲ CROSS WAS BROUGHT FROM THE CHURCH NEAR BY

give her, but one of the English soldiers broke his staff into two pieces and tied them together in the shape of a cross. This he gave her, and in joy she clasped it close to her breast.

Afterwards a cross was brought from the church near by. This she embraced closely and long, and kept it till she was fastened to the stake.

As the fire mounted round her the priest

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held the cross close, that her dying eyes might rest upon it.

Then the smoke rose and hid her from sight. Suddenly from the midst came her clear, strong voice, strong in her faith as of old, saying, "My voices were of God. They have not deceived me."

Once again she cried "Jesus! Jesus!" And with His name upon her lips the brave soul of the Maid of France passed to Heaven.

"We are lost, we have burnt a saint," said one of the English who stood round.

Strange to say, as if by a miracle, her heart was found to be untouched by the flames, and when all was over her ashes were thrown into the River Seine, for the English feared that some might believe she had escaped.

From that time the English hold on Rouen became less strong, and in October, 1449, the gates of the city were opened to Charles. The following year a fresh trial was begun in the Cathedral of Paris.

Jeanne's mother came to plead the cause of her dead daughter. Every one spoke well of Jeanne and declared that she had been truly led by God.

Afterwards a great procession was held in her honour, and a sermon preached on the very place where Jeanne had been so cruelly burnt.

About five hundred years afterwards, in 1920, in the great Church of St Peter's at Rome, the Pope, Benedict XV, proclaimed her a Saint of the Catholic Church.

